2: Fortes E-5 (1934-1937) 1945
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184 undercurrent of passion and tension. When a *dee* parade reaches the
764 border between adjacent Namoo and Talis settlements, there is a danger
of a hostile demonstration from the other side and the older men have
[574] to be very watchful. In 1936 a Tongo *dee* parade was attacked by a group
of Gbeog men who were simply swept off their feet by the sight and sound
of the armed mob of their traditional enemies.

184 One is constantly reminded of the cleavage between Namoos and non-
Namoos in less dramatic ways, too, for they are for ever contrasting them-
selves. The Namoos scoff in private at the esoteric ritual practices of
the Talis, the non-Namoos everywhere vaunt their superiority, as the
true 'owners of the land', to the immigrant Namoos. And, at the same
time, the politico-ritual leaders of each group keep jealous watch on those
of the other to see that their mutual bonds of politico-ritual collaboration
[123] are maintained. The most serious obstruction I had to overcome in my
field work was the passive resistance of the Talis inspired by my initial
association with the Tongo Namoos.

This cleavage comes to the fore in different ways in different parts of
Taleland. It is most precisely worked out in the Tongo district, where it
dominates the politico-ritual relations of group to group. It is justifiable,
moreover, to see a connexion between this and the fact that the Tong
Hills, the most conspicuous landmark in the country, are universally
accepted as the centre of the 'real Talis'. Though many Hill Talis
clans claim to be of immigrant descent, they are socially alined with the
alleged aboriginal clans. This in itself would suggest that the cleavage
between Namoos and non-Namoos is not an artifact of history but the
expression of a deep-lying principle of social organization in Tale society.

184 Furthermore, it is evident that the natives visualize their society as
796 composed of three major regions, the region of the 'real Talis', the region
of Tongo and the clans adjacent to it, and the region of the clans adjacent
to the Namnam. These regions are not, however, precisely defined socio-
geographic territories. They overlap one another and merge into one
another. They also overlap adjacent regions of non-Tale clans; but
the Tallensi lay no stress on this, for they are differentiated by the index
of the Great Festivals. Each region has its particular form of Harvest
Festival, but the Great Festivals of the Tallensi constitute a single cycle.
The festivals specific to the different regions follow a fixed sequence in
relation to one another, and this is a matter of ritual obligation, not merely
of convenience. Thus the very index which in certain perspectives and
certain situations serves to differentiate the three regions of Tale society,
in other perspectives and other situations serves to demonstrate their
interdependence and overlapping.

184 In addition, the cycle of Great Festivals embraces clans of Goris,
796 Namnam, and Mamprusi on the frontiers of Taleland. These clans take
648 the cue for the date of their particular Harvest Festivals from neighbouring
Tale clans, and in turn pass on the signal to other non-Tale clans, though
they themselves fall outside the normal frame of social reference of the
'real Talis', upon whom the cycle pivots. The best example of this is
Nuŋ, a tiny settlement between Biuŋ and the White Volta. Politically
and ritually the people of Nuŋ are Mamprusi. The head of the settlement

3: Fortes E-5 (1934-1937) 1949
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other way round. These involve not individual economic or social interests but the common interests of the lineage. If a man has to answer a charge of having abducted another m[illegible] wife, or meet a demand for the payment of bride-price or th[illegible]r of the custody of a child, his 'brothers' and 'fathers' of the s[illegible]er lineage will rally round him unanimously. For marriage aff[illegible]dir yɛla) involve the common interests of the whole lineag[illegible]ver cannot deduce from the opinions or actions of any mem[illegible] the inner lineage, in such a situation, whether he is the full (*soog*) brother or the paternal (*sunzɔ*) brother, or a more distant classificatory brother or father of the main actor.

The differences of degree in the solidarity of siblings is most apparent in residential, economic, and domestic arrangements. So if one asks a man whom he lives with and he replies 'I share a homestead with my older brother (*man ni m-bier la kab kpeerəme*'—lit. 'I and my older brother enter together'), one can be certain that the older brother referred to is not more distantly related to him than a father's half-brother's son. But the term *bier* has a different connotation in marriage affairs. For instance, Yin's son's father-in-law came one day to see Yin about the payment of his daughter's bride-price. There was a long and at moments acrimonious argument, with the intermediary (*pɔɣasama*) acting as conciliator. At length Yin said: 'I agree to your terms; but of course I must first consult my older brothers (*biernam*).' Everybody understood that what Yin meant was that he should first have to obtain the formal consent of the elders of his inner lineage.

As we have learnt before, generation differences are not reckoned beyond the limits of the inner or at most medial lineage. Beyond this range, therefore, all clanswomen are called sisters (*tap*) and all clansmen who are one's contemporaries or one's own siblings' contemporaries are described as siblings. In relation to them the pattern of sentiment and conduct that holds between true siblings only comes into action *vis-à-vis* non-clansmen, and then in a very attenuated form. It is a question chiefly of united action and mutual loyalty in the service of the corporate interests of the maximal lineage or clan. So any man will come to the assistance of a clansman in an argument or fight with a man of another clan, irrespective of the rights or wrongs of the case. This is vividly seen in hunting or fishing battues. It is a very common thing for two or three men to lay claim to having killed an animal, especially if no arrow is found embedded in the animal's flesh. Then the clansmen of the claimants rally round them and their dispute turns into a violent altercation between two or three solid phalanxes of hunters. As we have previously narrated,[1] a famous war of the old days began in this way. Similarly, market brawls occasionally arise from a man's clansmen coming to his support in an argument. The commonest

[1] Cf. *Dynamics of Clanship*, ch. xiii.

3: Fortes E-5 (1934-1937) 1949
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cause of such brawls is women. A man sees a man of another clan talking to the wife of a member of his inner or medial lineage—or even to the wife of a distant clansman of his. He suspects the couple of plotting the woman's abduction and accuses them of this. In a few minutes clansmen of the two disputants who happen to be near come to their support; and so a brawl may ensue.

But where the ideal of the equality and solidarity of siblings is most apparent in social relations outside the inner lineage, is in the institutionalized co-operation of lineages and lineage segments. It is most conspicuous in important ceremonial and ritual matters such as funerals or changes in the custody of lineage shrines. But it emerges also in jural affairs such as marriage transactions and reconciliation ceremonies. The maxim 'Brothers look after one's affairs (*Sunzɔp mmaan ycla*)' sums this up for the native. Thus, as we have described in our previous book,[1] at funeral ceremonies all the *sunzɔ* lineages of the group celebrating the funeral are bound to be present, and it is the representatives of these lineages that supervise and mostly take the lead in the various rites. When Kpe'emi died, the messengers bearing the sad tidings did not go straight home to his father. They went first to an elder of a different section (*yizug*) of the clan; he took them to the head of a segment of Kpe'emi's section different from that to which Kpe'emi belonged; and this man took them to the head of Kpe'emi's segment, who conducted them to Kpe'emi's father. Thus the blow was softened by the presence, the condolences, and the immediate ritual action of *sunzɔp* of different degrees. Similarly, if a man seduces a clansman's wife, he appeals not to his own immediate lineage head but to the head of an inner or medial lineage closely related to his to intercede on his behalf. The reciprocal of these and similar acts of assistance given to *sunzɔp* is the strictly defined rights of *sunzɔp* lineages to certain shares of sacrificial or ceremonial meat, beer, flour, and so forth. But the Tallensi do not regard these rights as rewards for 'looking after' the affairs of a *sunzɔ*. The rights and the duties coexist as equally essential features of the relationship of 'brother' lineages.

As these examples show, there are, in fact, no person-to-person social relations between individuals who are only clan-siblings of the same quality as sibling relations in the narrow sense. Their solidarity is a consequence of the general solidarity of the clan in situations affecting the common interest. Thus clan-brothers have no property relations *qua* clansmen. But the chief distinction between clan and inner lineage siblings lies in the sphere of sex. As we are aware, sexual relations with clan sisters outside the medial lineage are not regarded as disgraceful, and to have sexual relations with a distant clansman's wife is considered to be adultery, not incest. Tallensi, thinking of these matters in their inveterate socio-spatial terminology, say that clan siblings are 'too far'

[1] *Dynamics of Clanship*, pp. 215 ff.

6: Fortes E-5 (1934-1937) 1937 FE11 Tallensi FE11

226 227 The technique of fishing is simple. The men move to and fro all the time in the centre of the pool: the women form an irregular circle round the men and keep to the shallow periphery. Men use hand nets (*wɔk*) suspended from a single, strong withe bent in a roughly elliptical hoop, about 18 in. by 8 in. They scoop at random. If a fish is netted a quick twist of the wrist secures it in the bottom of the net, where it is dispatched with blows of an axe-shaft or the fist, and then hung from the man's waist on a string threaded through the gill cleft. Large nets (*pal*) of similar pattern, 8 or 9 feet long and manipulated by two men, are also employed, but the proportion of these is extremely small. Women use a heavy, beehive-shaped plunge basket (*sɔŋar*) about 2 feet high made of withes lashed together about 2 inches apart at the open end of the trap. At the top of the trap a circular aperture four inches or so in diameter is left, while the bottom, open end is about twenty-seven inches across. The women plunge this down on to the bed of the river every few minutes and insert a hand through the top aperture to extract the fish. Their catch goes into a small basket slung from a shoulder. Whereas men often land a big fish, women seldom catch anything above the size of a large herring. The natives explain this by pointing out that the biggest fish will naturally seek the deeper water in the centre of the pool, which is occupied by the men. Only fish escaping to the periphery will come the women's way.

226 571 The manual skill involved is however of secondary significance. Sociologically, the essential fact is that fishing is a group activity. Everybody fishes with and against his neighbour, his motor alertness and competitive cupidity at the highest. The excitement is indescribable. The glint of a fin through the water, brown with the mud churned up by the slow moving mass of men, causes a scrimmage. Pushing and shouting, a dozen men plunge their nets after the fish. In a well stocked pool the terrified fish leap out of the water, a fantastic and beautiful sight. Hands and nets swing out after the leaping fish, and the older men who remain on the bank watching call out with eager delight at the sight. The first catch of the day is greeted with a shout of pleasure, not very welcome to the fortunate fisherman, however, for the fish thus noticed cannot escape confiscation by the owner of the pool, as it is the ritual perquisite of the fetish.

226 578 579 Disputes are inevitable and may become violent. The rule is that a fish belongs to the person who nets or traps it. But a fish may be netted by one man, escape, and be at once netted by another, or a leaping fish may be pinned between two nets. Such incidents lead to an angry altercation in which the one who has the fish generally gets the better. Once a quarrel over a fish occurred between a man of the *Namoos* group and one of the *Tallis* group. The latter ran ashore with his fish followed by the *Namoos* claimant. In a few minutes a small riot had broken out. *Namoos* and *Tallis* rushed out, snatched sticks, branches of trees, fishing nets, and flew at each other. Only the intervention of a brother of the Chief of Tongo stopped what might have become a serious fight. The dispute over the fish in this case was the signal for an outburst of political hostility. Words quickly lead to blows in such an atmosphere of heightened muscular and emotional tension.